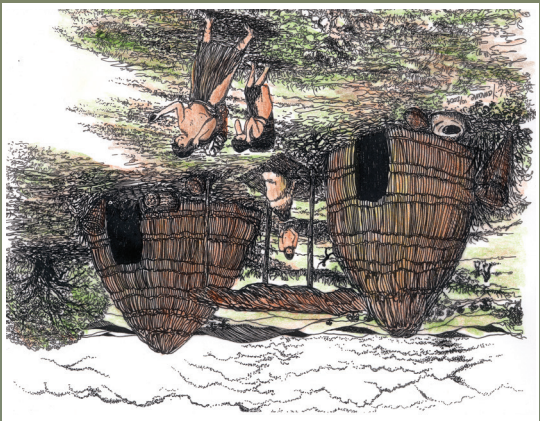




When Anza and his followers traveled through the Bay Area, numerous groups of native peoples were living comfortably in small villages that dotted the landscape. This is what one of those villages may have looked like.



Drawing: Linda Yonnie (Runsten, an Ohlone tribe)

A Rich and Varied Landscape

The animals and landscapes the Anza party saw were vastly different from what we see today, in part due to local Indian management of the land with specialized burning, digging, and pruning techniques. Fresh and saltwater marsh covered vast areas. The foothills were covered with native bunchgrasses and spring wildflowers, interspersed with oaks and buckeyes, and bordered by streamside trees and shrubs. Father Font recorded frequent sightings of pronghorn antelope, grizzly bear, and tule elk.

The Anza Expedition of 1775–1776, crucial to the Spanish colonization of the area, led to changes that over time have shaped the Bay Area we see today.

George H. Cardinet, Jr.

April 8, 1909–January 19, 2007



George Cardinet has been called the Father of California Trails and the Grandfather of National Trails. A resident of Clayton and Concord California, he became a trail advocate in the early 1940s. His efforts significantly contributed to the passage of the California Hiking and Riding Trails Act of 1945 and the National Trails System Act of 1968, which established an extensive system of scenic and historic trails.

With his strong passion for history, Cardinet was drawn to the significance of the Juan Bautista de Anza Expedition of 1775–1776. In 1976 he organized a bicentennial reenactment of the 1,800-mile route from Mexico City to the San Francisco Bay. He rode a major portion of the trail as Lt. Joaquin Moraga, Anza's second in command. To his great delight and as a result of his determined advocacy, the trail was designated a National Historic Trail in 1990.

Cardinet worked with the East Bay Regional Park District to annex Contra Costa County to the District in 1964. He established trails and trail links in and between East Bay Regional and Mount Diablo State Parks. In all, Cardinet is credited with having mapped and routed more than 200 miles of trails throughout the greater East Bay region.

To learn more about George Cardinet's accomplishments, visit www.pnts.org.

Cover Painting: David Rickman, National Park Service
Above photo: American Trails Magazine



Portraits: unknown, New Mexico Governor's Palace;
David Rickman, National Park Service

Anza's expedition traveled well-worn trails used by Ohlone, Bay Miwok, and Northern Valley Yokuts peoples from several tribes, whose ancestors had lived in the East Bay for some 13,000 years. According to expedition diaries of Anza and Font, native peoples responded to the newcomers with surprise, fear, and hospitality, including gifts of fish, seed "cakes," and other foods. In return the Spanish gave them glass beads.

For local tribal peoples, these encounters led to decades of disruption, dislocation, and suffering, first under Spanish rule, then under the Mexican and American governments. Despite this history, local tribal peoples find pride in preserving cultural traditions, bringing these forward into the future in both old and new ways, and work to preserve ancestral cultural sites.

Profound Changes

Pedro Font



Juan Bautista de Anza



Graphics: David Rickman, National Park Service

The Anza party overlooking the Golden Gate from what is now San Francisco.



In 1775 and 1776 Lt. Colonel Juan Bautista de Anza, Father Pedro Font, along with 240 settlers, soldiers, and others traveled 1,800 miles from Sonora, Mexico to Monterey, California. Their purpose was to bring permanent colonists to Spain's Alta California.

After arriving in Monterey, Anza and Font led a smaller group to choose sites for a mission and presidio in San Francisco. They then investigated today's Alameda and Contra Costa counties to see if there was a river running into the Bay, and explored further inland.

The travelers rode through diverse landscapes along the foothills, avoiding the marshes in low-lying areas. After traveling along the Carquinez Strait, San Pablo and Suisun Bays, the impassable marshlands of the Delta prevented further exploration to the east. The expedition returned to Monterey.

The Anza Expedition of 1775–1776

The Anza Expedition of 1776



East Bay
Regional Park District



Follow the historic journey of Juan Bautista de Anza through what is now part of the East Bay Regional Park District.

Learn more about Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail in the East Bay.
Contact the National Park Service:
415-623-2344, www.anzahistorictrail.org

East Bay Regional Park District Visitor Centers

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Juan Bautista de Anza, from a 1774 portrait in oil by Fray Orsi.

Juan Bautista de Anza Exploration of the San Francisco Bay Area, March and April 1776

Above image: Fray Orsi, Zoeth Skinner Eldredge, A History of California, 1915



The Anza Historic Trail

The Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail is administered by the U.S. National Park Service. This 1,210-mile historic route extends from Nogales, Arizona on the United States–Mexico border, through the desert and coastal areas of Southern California, along the Central Coast region, then through the San Francisco Bay Area.

The trail commemorates the story of the 1775–1776 Spanish Expedition led by Lt. Colonel Juan Bautista de Anza. The expedition left Mexico with 240 settlers, soldiers, and others bound for Alta California to colonize the region, explore, and establish San Francisco’s presidio and mission. The story of Anza’s smaller East Bay exploration in March and April of 1776 is displayed in fourteen interpretive panels throughout the East Bay, produced in collaboration with the National Park Service.

We invite you to retrace the travels of Anza and learn about the profound changes set in motion by the Expedition on the future of the people and the land around us.



NPS Juan Bautista
de Anza webpage

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